



CORRELATION BETWEEN ENGLISH STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN ESA (ENGLISH STUDENTS ASSOCIATION) AND THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

Many studies found that there was correlation between the students' participation in organization and their academic achievement. However, in a higher institution, where this study takes place, there is an assumption states that participating in organization does not have any relation with the students' academic achievement even though the organization is related to their field of study. Therefore, this study is directed to investigate whether the assumption is correct or not. In conducting this study, thirty five English students of the seventh semester were randomly taken as the sample. Questionnaires were distributed to collect data about degree of the students' participation in ESA (English Students Association) and their GPA scores. The result shows that the assumption is correct; there is no relation between English students' participation in ESA and their academic achievement. It is shown on the result of correlational computation which shows that the correlational value is -0.19 and the critical value is 0.4487; the correlation is negative but not significant. So, the null hypothesis which says that there is no relation between those two variables is accepted. This result is contrast with the principle of establishing ESA; to support the English students' competences in English. Therefore, some recommendations are presented at the final section of this paper.

Keywords: *correlation, English students' participation in ESA, academic achievement*

Introduction

Students' participation in extracurricular activities has some positive effects academically and socially. Academically, the students who actively participate in extracurricular activities or organizations mostly have better grade. It is shown by many previous studies, such as studies conducted by Jordan & Nettles (1999), Massoni (2011), George (2012), Kariyana, Maphosa, & Mapuranga (2012), and Hart (2013). Those previous studies found that the students' participation in organization is associated with their academic performances.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Thompson (2009) showed that self-efficacy scores were significantly higher in the extracurricular group than in the non-extracurricular group of the students. "A strong sense of self-efficacy can influence a person's aspirations; increase their level of motivation and their perseverance in the face of difficulties and setbacks" (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli in Thompson, 2009, p. 3). Therefore, self-efficacy influences the students' academic achievement. Then, based on the result of his study, Thompson suggested students to participate in extracurricular activities since it would produce positive effects on their perceived academic ability.

However, even though there have been many previous studies showed the positive effect of students' participation in organization on their academic achievement. There is a point that should be noted here. To gain those positive effects, the students are required to balance their time for organization and their time for study (George, 2012). Thus, the students should manage their time well. Moreover, based on the result of a previous study conducted by Kariyana et al. (2012), it is known that educators, as the sample of their study, stated that participating in organizations did not guarantee that the students always get success in their academic performances.

Moreover, an assumption that is widely spread in the institution where this study takes place states that participating in organization is not associated with the academic achievement. Even though the organization is related to their field, English students in that institution tend to avoid joining in its activities. So, many of them do not want to participate in any organizations. Moreover, there are some of them say that organization will give negative effect on academic achievement. Therefore, by considering the problem above, the present study is conducted to see whether the assumption is right or not.

Explicitly, the research question of this study is: *'Is there any relation between the English students' participation in ESA and their GPA?'* So, based on that research question, the objective of this study is to find out whether the English students' participation in ESA is associated with their academic achievement or not by testing a null hypothesis: *'There is no relation between the English students' participation in ESA and their GPA.'* The result of this study is expected to be an information for students, lecturers, and stakeholders in the institution where this study takes place which then the information can be a consideration for them to make decision related to activities of ESA provided future.

Participation in Organization and Academic Achievement

Academic achievement can be influenced by many factors. The factors can be categorized by two types: internal and external factors. Internal factors come from the students themselves such as age, motivation and intelligence and external factors come from outside of the students such as family, teacher, materials, school and home environments, duration of autonomous study, and habitual activities (Ali, Haider, Munir, Khan, & Ahmed, 2013). Those factors have been studied by many previous studies and the present study focuses on investigating one of those external factors: their habitual activities with others. Particularly, this study investigates whether there is association between the students' participation in organization as their activities and their academic achievement.

There have been many previous studies which investigated the correlation between the students' participation in organization and their academic achievement. Some of them are conducted by Jordan & Nettles (1999), Everson & Millsap (2005), Jamalis & Fauzee (2007), Thompson (2009), Massoni (2011), George (2012), Kariyana, Maphosa, & Mapuranga (2012), and Hart (2013). The study conducted by Jordan & Nettles (1999) investigated the students' various activities out of the school that indirectly influence their academic achievement. Through their study, they found that students' participation in structured activities and religious activities and time spent interacting with adults had positive and significant effects on various academic achievements. However, time spent hanging out with peers was consistently negatively associated their academic achievements.

Furthermore, Everson & Millsap (2005) investigate the students' participation in extracurricular and their SAT scores. SAT score is an admission test used by the institution where their study took place. Then, they found that participation in extracurricular activities provided a measurable and meaningful gain in their SAT scores. They also found that it could become supplementary education programs that had positive effects for minorities and disadvantaged high school students who were often ill-served by traditional academic curricula. Moreover, the other study conducted by Jamalis & Fauzee (2007) found that there were two main roles of the students' participation in extracurricular activities: socialization with friends and leadership development. They also stated that there would be not negative effects of the students' participation in extracurricular activities as long as they could manage their time for extracurricular and for study. Even, the participation in extracurricular activities has positive effects for the students' academic achievements.

Then, the study conducted by Thompson (2009) compared the level of self-efficacy between the students who participated in extracurricular activities and they who did not participate. "A strong sense of self-efficacy can influence a person's aspirations; increase their level of motivation and their perseverance in the face of difficulties and setbacks" (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli in Thompson, 2009, p. 3). So, it can directly influence the students' academic achievement. In his study, Thompson (2009) found that self-efficacy scores were significantly higher in the extracurricular group than in the non-extracurricular group of the students. Therefore, Thompson suggested that students' participation in extracurricular activities would produce positive effects on their perceived academic ability.

More current studies conducted by Massoni (2011), George (2012), Kariyana et al. (2012), and Hart (2013) also showed similar results. They found that the students' participation in extracurricular activities gave positive effects on their academic achievements. Moreover, Massoni, (2011) also stated that the students who participated in extracurricular did not only get better grades, but they also had better behavior in social value. Interpersonal skills point such as collaboration and teamwork which are included in social value also became additional point as a positive effect found by George (2012). However, to gain those positive effects, George added that the students were required to balance their time to extracurricular activities and their time to study. Moreover, Kariyana et al., (2012) stated that even though the educators had positive views on the students' participation in extracurricular activities to support their academic achievement, they also stated that participation in those extracurricular did not always guarantee the students' success academically.

Based on the findings of previous studies above, it is shown that participation in organization out of study hours at school have positive effects: academically and socially. However, there is also a previous study stated that there is no guarantee that the students who participate in organization always get success academically. They are required to balance their time for organization and their time for their study. So, a good time management is required to be owned by the students.

English Students Association (ESA)

English Students Association (ESA) is internal organization at campus which is run by English students. Most institutions in Indonesia that provides English Education Study Program have this organization. It is run by undergraduate English students. Among those students, there are some of them selected to be executives and the other students are the members of this organization. Since this organization is built for English students, the programs held are related to English. They are held to improve the students' capacity in organization in general, and in English in particular.

Higher educations around the world that provide English as one of their program studies provide this organization with different names. For example, Northwestern University in Boston uses EGSA (English Graduate Students Association), University of North Carolina Wilmington uses EGA (English Graduate Association), The University of Kansas uses SAGE (Students Association of Graduates in English), Brock University in Canada uses ESA (English Students Association), and Cokroaminoto University and Indonesia University of Education also use ESA (English Students Association). Therefore, this organization is familiar for English students around the world.

Generally, this organization is proposed to support the students' social competences, and academic competences as well since most activities within are related to English. For social competences, the new students are the target for this reason since they need guidance for their beginning studies both from their senior and lecturers. Moreover, alumni also need connection both with other alumni and their juniors. In this case, ESA has important role to facilitate those connection. Then, for academic competences, ESA also has role to provide some activities that can support the members'

competences in English. Here are some example activities held by ESA in campus where this research takes place:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. English Holiday | 7. English Day |
| 2. English Camp | 8. Leadership Training |
| 3. Spending Night | 9. Advocacy Training |
| 4. English Competition | 10. English Speech in front of ESA's secretariat |
| 5. Sunday Meeting | |
| 6. Let's Teaching English | |

By looking at those activities above, it can be seen that eight out of 10 activities are related to English. Those activities are provided to support the members' English competences. Then, two other activities purely proposed for general knowledge (leadership and advocacy training) which are also needed by the members.

Methods

This research is a correlation study since it fits the characteristic of the correlational study. It investigates whether there is relation between two variables, namely the students' participation in an organization and their academic achievement. Hatch & Farhady (1982, p. 192), Denscombe (2010, p. 258), and Gay et al. (2009, p. 9) state that correlation study facilitate the researchers to see the degree of relationship or connection between two variables or among three or more variables. In more detail, Gay et al. (2009, p. 9) also state that correlational study obtained data for two or more variables under investigation from a single group of participants. The present study does the same thing; gathering data for two variables (the degree of students' participation in organization and their academic achievement) from a single group of students. Moreover, one important point noticed here is the purpose of this study is not looking for the cause-effect between the variables, but only the degree of relationship between the variables under investigation (Hatch & Farhady (1982, p. 201), Denscombe (2010, p. 259), and Gay et al. (2009, p. 9)).

In determining the sample in this study, 35 students were chosen randomly. The number of 35 is based on the theory of Hatch & Farhady (1982) who state that when the sample is at least 30 and taken randomly, it is hoped that it has been enough to be representative of the population. 35 students in this study were taken from 7 different classes: 5 students from each class were taken randomly. Each class consists of 40 students, so the number of population in this study is 280 students. They were the seventh semester students who had passed the period of their activation in organization. They had passed 3 periods of ESA's leadership. Therefore, they were taken as the sample since they were expected to give meaningful data about their participation in ESA during those three periods and their current GPA which became the measured variables in the present study.

Then, in gathering the data in this study, questionnaire was used. There were 13 items within the questionnaire. The first item was proposed to identify the students' GPA score and the second until the thirteen items were proposed to identify the students' degree of participating in ESA. The questionnaire is adapted from Case (2007) who studied the correlations between extracurricular activity participation, parental involvement, well-being, and academic competence in elementary school children. In her study, Case used 4 types of questionnaire to gain the data needed and those questionnaires were distributing to the students and their parents to capture the data needed. However, in the present study, there was only one questionnaire used and it was distributed to the students only since the data needed are only related to the students to answer the research question.

After gathering the data from the students about the degree of their participation in ESA and their GPA score, the next procedure was analyzing the data. The data analysis was done quantitatively and begun with scoring the students' degree of participation in

ESA. Then, the next step was manually calculating the degree of relationship between the degree of the students' participation in ESA and their GPA scores by using the formula of Pearson product moment correlation below:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N (\sum XY) - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2] [N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

(Hatch & Farhady, 1982, p. 198)

Where

r = the correlation

N= the number of sample

X = the value of the first variable (the degree of students' participation in ESA)

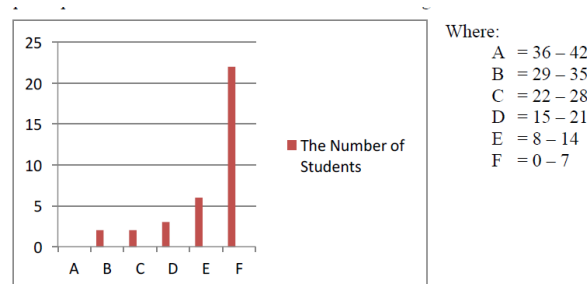
Y = the value of the second variable (the students' GPA score)

Then, after gaining the value of **r**, it was then compared with the value of critical value with level of significant is 1% and degree of freedom 33 ($N-2 \rightarrow 35-2 = 33$) to see whether the variables are associated significantly or not.

Results And Discussion

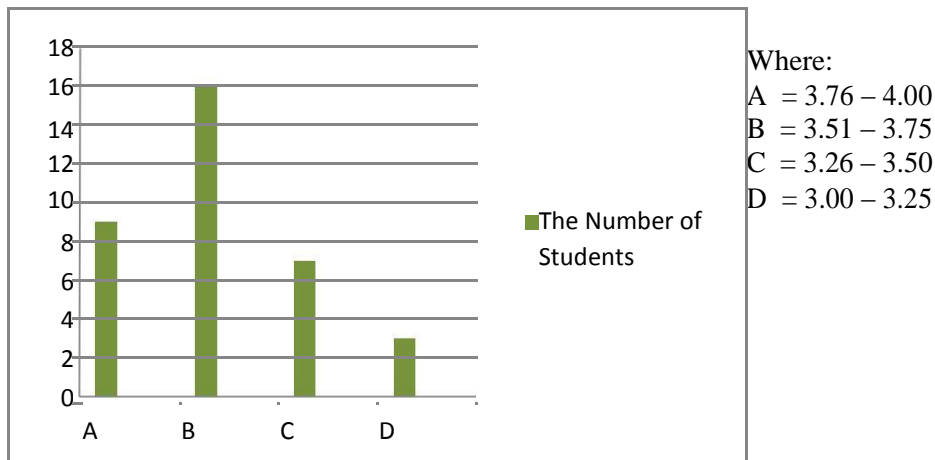
After analyzing the students' answer in the questionnaire, it is found that the correlation between the degree of the English students' participation in ESA and their academic achievement (GPA score) is negative, but it is not significant. So, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. It means, there is no relation between the English students' participation in ESA and their academic achievement. Even though ESA's activities are dominated by English use, it does not have relation with the English students' GPA scores. The detail findings are presented below:

Based on the students' answers in the questionnaire, it is known that the students' participation in ESA is low. It is shown in the following bar chart:



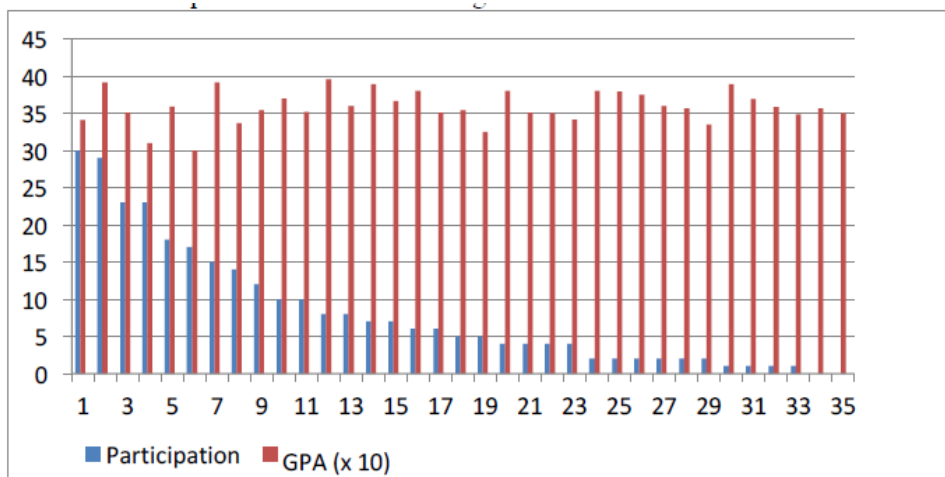
The horizontal axis of the bar chart above shows the degree of the students' participation in ESA and the vertical axis shows the number of the students. It is divided into 6 zones: A, B, C, D, E, and F. Those zones indicate the number of the students' participation out of 42 ESA's activities during the students' study at campus. Then, in the bar chart above it can be seen that there is no student classified in zone A (participated 36-42 activities). There are only 2 out of 35 students classified in zone B (participated in 29-35 activities). In contrast, there are 18 out of 35 students are in zone F. It indicates that those 18 students are not active in ESA. They just participated 7 or less times in ESA's activities, and even there are 2 out of them never participated at all. Therefore, based on the data about the students' participation in ESA's activities, it indicates that there are only few students actively participated in ESA's activities during their study. (The complete data are presented in appendix A)

The data of the second variable (the students' GPA scores) in this study are presented in the following bar chart:



The horizontal axis of the bar chart above shows the zones of the students' GPA scores. There are four zones in the chart above: A, B, C, and D. It indicates the students' GPA scores; from 3.00 until 4.00. Meanwhile, the vertical axis of the bar chart above shows the number of the students who are classified in those four zones. Then, based on the bar chart above, it can be seen that there are 9 students classified in zone A (GPA: 3.76 – 4.00) and 16 students in zone B (GPA: 3.51 – 3.75). Then, there are only 3 students in zone D (GPA: 3.00 – 3.25). It indicates that the students have high enough GPA scores, with $\bar{x} = 3.59$.

The relationship between the degree of the students' participation in ESA and their GPA scores are presented in the following chart:



The bar chart above shows the comparison between the students' participation (blue bar) and their GPA (red bar). The horizontal axis shows the student 1 until student 35. They are arranged based on their degree of participation in ESA: from highest to lowest. The student 1 has the highest participation and the student 35 has the lowest participation. Then, to have clearer view on the students' GPA, their scores are multiplied by 10 (x10), so the reader can see the comparison between the blue bars (participation) and the red bars (GPA) clearly.

By looking at the bar chart above, it can simply said that there is no relationship between the degree of the students' participation in ESA and their GPA score or even the correlation might be negative. The decrease of students' participation is not followed by the decrease of students' GPA. The students' GPA scores seem to be normal even though the students' participation becomes lower. Moreover, based on the result of statistical correlational calculation, it is found that the value of correlational testing is -0.19 and the critical value ($df=33$, $\alpha=1\%$ two tails) is 0.4487. So, it indicates that the correlation is negative but it is not significant since the value of r_{xy} is less than critical value (the complete calculation is in appendix B).

The result of this study is contrast with the other previous studies which found that students' participation in extracurricular is associated with their academic achievement, such as studies conducted by Massoni (2011), George (2012) Kariyana et al. (2012), and Hart (2013). Those previous studies found that there was relation between the students' participation in extracurricular and their academic achievement. Even, those studies and the other studies conducted by Jordan & Nettles (1999), Everson & Millsap (2005) and Thompson (2009) found that students' participation in extracurricular gave positive effects on the students' academic performances. Therefore, to have a better view about the topic under investigation in this study, particularly about 'why it can be happened', a further study is needed since this study can only present the correlational point of view, not cause-effect point of view between the two variables.

Conclusion And Recommendations

By looking at the result of statistical computation by manually using the formula of Pearson Product Moment, it is found that the correlation between the degree of the English students' participation in ESA and their academic achievement is negative, but it is not significant. The value of its correlational computation is -0.19 and the critical value is 0.4487. It indicates that the null hypothesis cannot be rejected since the value of correlational calculation is not bigger than the critical value. So, the null hypothesis is accepted, meaning that there is no relation between the English students' participation in ESA and their academic achievement.

Based on the result of this study, it implies that even though the ESA's activities are dominated by English use, it does not have relation with the English students' GPA score. Then, by looking at the result, it is recommended for:

- a. The executives and the consultants of ESA, and the stakeholders, particularly the head of English Education Study Program, to notice more the activities provided by ESA. It is expected that ESA's activities can support the English students' academic achievement since the organization is proposed to especially support the students' English competence which is then expected to contribute to their academic performance.
- b. The next researcher to investigate further this topic by looking for the reasons why it can be happened. Since ESA is established to support English students' competence in their own field, it becomes questionable why the degree of the students' participation in ESA's activities does not have any correlation with their academic achievement. So, the point of 'why' can be investigated in the further study.

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